

Response to Arguments

Applicant's reply filed **28 May 2009** has been fully considered. **Claims 26-29, 31-34, 36-47, 49-50 and 52-61** are pending: **claims 1-25, 30, 35, 48, 51 and 62** have been cancelled, **claims 26 and 49-50** have been amended and **claims 27-29, 31-34, 36-47 and 52-61** are as previously presented.

The 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, rejection of **claims 49-50** is withdrawn as a result of Applicant's amendments to the claims.

The 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections of **claims 26-29, 31-34, 36-47 and 49-50** and of **claims 53-55, 57-58 and 61** as unpatentable over Machac et al. (US 6,608,012) in view of Joye et al. (US 5,916,860) are withdrawn in view of Applicant's amendments to **claim 26**.

The 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections of **claim 52** as unpatentable over Machac in view of Joye and further in view of Wilkins et al. (US 5,215,675) and of **claims 56 and 59-60** as unpatentable over Machac in view of Joye and further in view of Stewart et al. (US 6,432,544) are withdrawn in view of Applicant's amendments to **claim 26**.

Examiner's Amendment

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

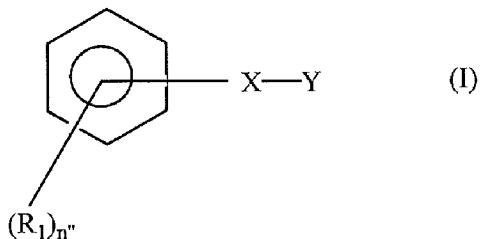
Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Michael Krawzenek on **21 September 2009**.

The application has been amended as follows:

Amend **claim 53** to the following:

53. A process for cleaning an item soiled by organic materials, comprising dipping the soiled item into ~~the a~~ a cleaning solution ~~of claim 26 consisting of, based on the total weight of the solution:~~

- more than 50% by weight of at least one lactone (component A);
- 1 to 10% by weight of at least one surfactant compound (component B) having a HLB ranging from 8 to 15 and selected from the group consisting of compounds of formula:



wherein:

R₁ denotes a hydrocarbon group comprising from 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

n'' in an integer from 1 to 5,

X denotes a valence link, -O-, -OCH₂, C=O or (CH₂)_k, k being an integer

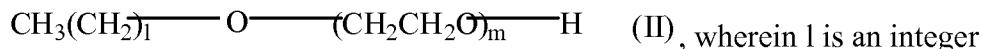
varying from 1 to 2;

Y denotes (RO)_jH wherein j is an integer ranging from 2 to 40, and

R is a divalent hydrocarbon group,

and compounds of formula:

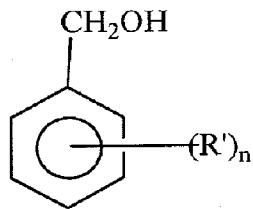
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from 6 to 13 and m is an integer from 3 to 15; and

- at least another component selected from:

a component C of formula:



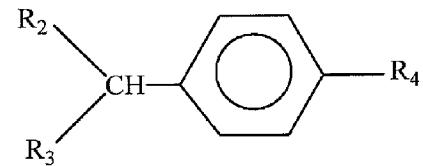
wherein:

n denotes an integer from 0 to 5, and

R' is an alkyl group or an alkoxy group -[O-Z]n-H in which Z is a divalent

alkyl group and n' is an integer from 0 to 10, and

a component D of formula:



wherein:

R₂ and R₃, being identical or different, are alkyl groups having from 1 to 4

carbon atoms, and

R₄ is H or an alkyl group having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms.

Examiner's Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the cleaning solution has been amended to be *consisting of* at least one lactone (instant component A), at least one surfactant (instant component B) with an HLB from 8 to 15 of instant formulas (I) and (II) and at least another component selected from the formulas of instant components C and D. The closest prior arts of record Machac et al. (US 6,608,012) and Joye et al. (US 5,916,860) both teach cleaning and/or stripping solutions comprising γ -butyrolactone and ethoxylated/propoxylated nonionic surfactants (Machac see abstract, col 2 ln 50-67 and col 4 ln 30-41; Joye see abstract, col 4 ln 11-15, col 2 ln 54-59, col 3 ln 41-44, col 3 ln 10-11 and col 3 ln 61) and both also teach methods of removing coatings from surfaces (Machac, see col 1 ln 31-42, col 5 ln 16-23 and col 5 ln 36-38; Joye, see col 5 ln 11-12 and col 4 ln 24-32). Machac further teaches including benzyl alcohol (col 3 ln 55-60) in the cleaning/stripping compositions. However, both Machac and Joye require the presence of other components to the cleaning/stripping compositions (Machac, carbonate/dibasic ester/pyrrolidine see col 1 ln 30-59; Joye, dibasic ester see col 1 ln 30-64) and there is not teaching or suggestion in the prior art of record to remove the additional required components from the cleaning/stripping compositions of either Machac or Joye. Furthermore, none of the additional required components of Machac or Joye are compounds of either of instant components C or D and there is nothing of record to show them to be obvious variants.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Correspondence

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JANE L. STANLEY whose telephone number is (571)270-3870. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 7:30 am - 5 pm, alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Eashoo can be reached on (571) 272-1197. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Mark Eashoo/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1796

/JLS/